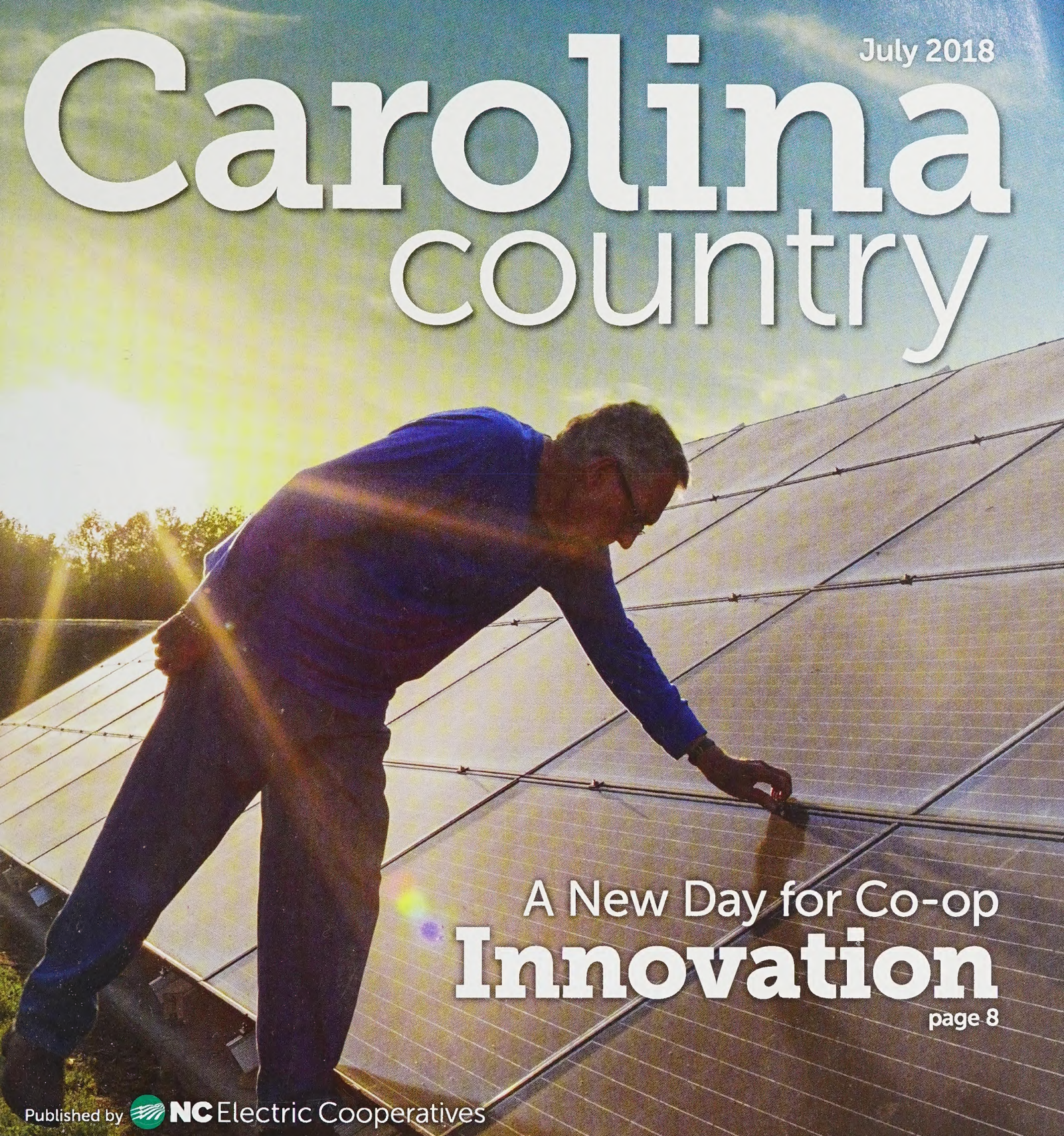
July 2018

Carolina country



A New Day for Co-op Innovation

page 8

Published by NC Electric Cooperatives

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Our Outdoor Issue

Starting on page 10

Lumbee Homecoming turns 50

page 26

Launching model rockets with 'Granny Good'—page 22

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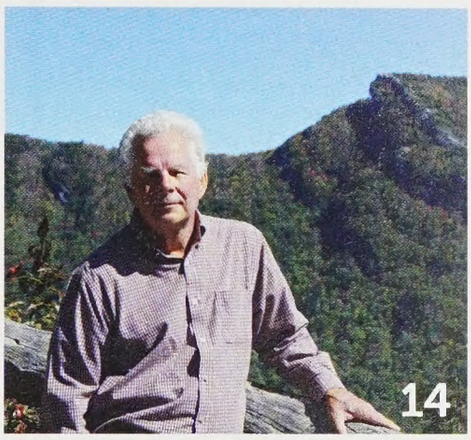

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Tom Butler checks a solar panel on his Harnett County hog farm, the site of the newest electric co-op microgrid project. Read more about Butler Farms on page 8.

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Retired Forest Ranger C.W. Smith reflects on 34 years of service.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Peculiar Produce

Have photos of a giant squash or a radish that bears a striking resemblance to an uncle? We want to see them! See page 13 for details.

Carolina country

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North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to nearly 900,000 homes and businesses. The 26 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

Why Do We Send You Carolina Country Magazine?
Your cooperative sends you Carolina Country as a convenient, economical way to share with its members information about services, director elections, meetings and management decisions. The magazine also carries legal notices that otherwise would be published in other media at greater cost.

Your co-op's board of directors authorizes a subscription to Carolina Country on behalf of the membership at a cost of less than $5 per year.

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Co-ops Prepare to Power Vehicles of the Future

By Dale Lambert

Modes of transportation have gone through many evolutions in the last 150 years. I can recall my grandparents sharing stories about how they routinely traveled by mule and wagon and horse and buggy. As we would pass near a specific spot off the highway in Randolph County—by automobile, of course—my grandmother would point out a particular spring where she and my grandfather would stop for lunch and water the animals. I'm glad those days are past us, and we have faster and more comfortable transportation options.

If we journeyed back in time to the late 1800s and early 1900s, though, the modes of transportation used for centuries were going through an unprecedented transformation. Inventors and entrepreneurs were experimenting with "horseless" options. You may be surprised to learn, as I was, that a leading option in urban areas during this time period was the electric vehicle (EV).

Electric vehicles were popular because they were quieter, more reliable and easier to drive, without the exhaust fumes that came along with gasoline- and steam-powered vehicles. At the turn of the century, electric vehicles represented approximately one-third of the "horseless" vehicles on the road. However, improvements in internal combustion engines, advancements in assembly line production that lowered vehicle costs, and limitations on the distance EVs could travel led to their early demise.

But, as the saying goes, history repeats itself. Headlines today point to the resurgence of electric vehicles, with major car manufacturers like Ford, GM and Toyota investing billions to build out EV fleets in the next decade.

Vehicle and battery manufacturers are spending billions of dollars on research and development to improve on-board technology and to address the greatest hurdle for many potential EV owners—range anxiety. The results are astounding.

The cost for Lithium-ion battery packs experienced a 24 percent drop from a year ago and are about a fifth of their cost in 2010, according to a Bloomberg New Energy Finance survey. With these being the current battery technology of choice for most car manufacturers, the expectation is that costs will continue to decrease as production increases.

Electric cooperative members across North Carolina are embracing electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids (see data on page 6). In response, North Carolina's electric cooperatives are preparing to ensure a seamless transition to electric-powered transportation. Co-ops are working with their members to gather EV charging data in order to analyze the impact on the electrical system. Many are also developing innovative rate options that provide value to EV owners while efficiently managing this new load so *all* members benefit.

Even with major interstates across the state, it's impossible for vacationers to reach North Carolina's beautiful mountains and sunny beaches without passing through rural communities. Because electric co-ops are located in many of these areas, we are working together to create a network of charging stations that will support tourism by accommodating the charging needs of travelers, while also facilitating access to EV technologies in rural communities.

With the advancements in technology coupled with reduced cost, EV ownership is projected to grow substantially. If you should find yourself heading down this road, look to your electric cooperative as your trusted energy advisor. We'll be here to fuel your "horseless" vehicle with safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

Dale Lambert is CEO for Randolph EMC, located in Asheboro. He also serves as president of the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation board of directors.

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

NC Outdoors

Whatever your passion, there's very likely a way to feed it in North Carolina's great outdoors. In this issue, we touch on a few different ways to appreciate our outdoor spaces, from the mountains to the coast—whether it's reflecting on a seasoned Forest Ranger's career, finding quiet spots in bustling communities or raking coastal shoals for clams. Also, North Carolina's electric co-ops are making headlines with a new innovative microgrid. Learn more on page 8.

—Scott Gates, editor

Winning at Runoff

There was a small article in your publication in the May issue about a rain garden ("Wrestling Water in Your Landscape (and Winning)," page 14).

Our front yard slants down and is all mulch, and for five years it has been a mess—even with rock rivers to direct the rain further down our property. The rain constantly moves the mulch around and makes a lot of work for us every year.

After reading about a rain garden and discussing with a landscaper, we designed two angled plant beds in the front yard. That night there was a significant downpour and there have been two additional heavy rains this past week, and the rain gardens did their job. The mulch did not move!!

I do read the magazine every month—thank you for adding the rain garden idea.

Fran Skupski, Lexington
A member of EnergyUnited

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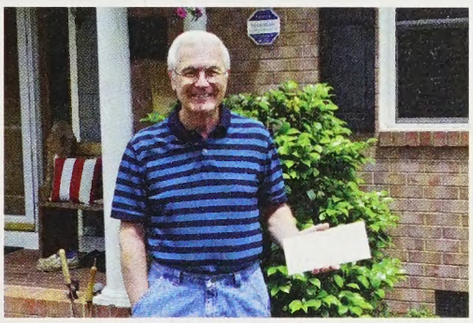


Winner: Chetola Resort Sweepstakes

John Foushee of Sanford, a member of Central Electric, was recently visited by Central Electric Communications Specialist James Taylor with good news: He was randomly selected as the winner of our April sweepstakes.

John received a weekend getaway for two at Chetola Resort in Blowing Rock, including a two-night stay at the Bob Timberlake Inn, a dinner out and some time at the spa.

"We love it up there at the Chetola Resort," John said. "I can't believe we actually won!"

Central Electric, headquartered in Sanford, serves 21,700 members in Chatham, Harnett, Lee, Moore and Randolph counties.

Cover Watercolor

We received several comments about our June cover, which featured a watercolor painting by Charlotte-based artist Gary Palmer (you can also spot his art in Wildlife in North Carolina magazine). Prints of his art, including our shells of North Carolina cover, are available from the artist—contact Gary at gary@garypalmerillustration.com or 704-366-1750.

Online Exchanges

Comments from carolinacountry.com

Wartime on the Outer Banks

from our June 2018 issue

> Thank you, Leah, for a wonderful article! Mom was very pleased as well!
>
> **Sharon Stanley**
> *(Sharon and her mother were interviewed for the article.)*

> Thank you, Sharon! I enjoyed meeting and talking with you and your Mom at the ceremony on Ocracoke and learning more about North Carolina's amazing history!
>
> **Leah Chester-Davis**

North Carolina Is a Catfish Paradise

from our August 2007 issue

> Looking for good catfishing areas in the French Broad. Any particular place? I canoe and kayak.
>
> **John Fleming**

> Most anywhere is good to try for cats. Where do you canoe and kayak at is a better question. If you're towards the head waters, then channel cats are a better species to target. The water is too cold for flatheads up there, but anywhere from Hendersonville to Hot Springs is good for both channels and flats. Deep holes and rocks pools are good places.
>
> **Bobbyjoe Surrett**

Broadband Access Leads 'Rural Day' Discussion

Expanding high-speed broadband access across rural North Carolina was the lead topic at the second annual Rural Day, presented by the NC Rural Center (ncruralcenter.org) as a time to discuss and advance issues facing rural communities across the state. North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives sponsored a segment on broadband at the May 29 event, held in downtown Raleigh. Other priority topics discussed throughout the day included health care access and small business development.

"Broadband internet access is critical to economic development in our rural areas," Governor Roy Cooper said during his opening remarks to the crowd of rural leaders and advocates. "We need meaningful investments to get last mile coverage and to stimulate private investment."

Roanoke Electric Cooperative CEO and keynote speaker Curtis Wynn discussed the rural/urban divide in relation to high-speed broadband access, creating a gulf between the "haves" and the "have-nots." "It is really worse than you think," Wynn said.

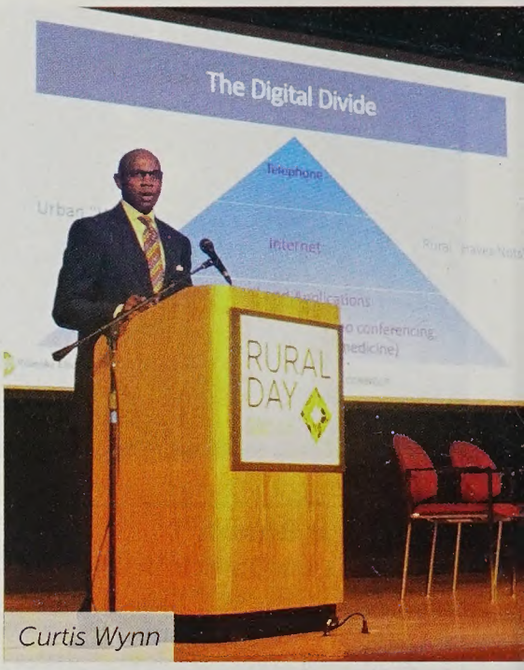
> Broadband internet access is critical to economic development in our rural areas.

He provided attendees with a snapshot of electric cooperatives and the types of territories they serve—as well as the industry transformation facing all electric utilities.

"While the state's electric co-ops are similar in many ways, we're all different. But we share the philosophy that although technology and connectivity enable this transformation, it's the consumers who are driving it," Wynn said. "The bottom line is that consumers want more options, and they're going to get them one way or another. What is the one connecting piece of all of this to make this happen for the rural consumer? Broadband."

Wynn stressed that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to reliable broadband connectivity (defined as upload/download speeds of 25/3 Mbps), and that it will take exploring partnerships among private entities and leveraging existing assets to achieve further deployment at less cost.

Nelle Hotchkiss, senior vice president of Association Services for North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives, also addressed this concept in remarks to the crowd.



Curtis Wynn

"We have a strong track record in North Carolina of investing in a powerful middle mile that has connected most of our anchor institutions, like schools, hospitals, libraries and local governments. We have a long way to go, though, in connecting that fiber backbone to the last mile," Hotchkiss said. "North Carolina's electric cooperatives support the efforts of all who want to provide meaningful broadband connectivity to rural consumers in North Carolina."

12 percent

NC co-op members considering an EV

Are You Considering an Electric Car?

Twelve percent of North Carolina electric co-op members are somewhat or very likely to go electric for their next car purchase, according to results from TSE Service's 2017–2018 Survey on the Cooperative Difference. Sound small? That percentage can really add up, considering that on a national scale, 12 percent represents 36 million people. Recent forecasts say electricity consumption by electric vehicles will grow to 118 terawatt-hours a year by 2030. Read "Co-ops Prepare to Power Vehicles of the Future" on page 4 to learn how NC electric co-ops are preparing for that growth so *all* members benefit.

Co-ops Committed to Global Electrification

A startling one billion people—or 13 percent of the world's population— still live without electricity, according to the International Energy Agency. But with true cooperative spirit and a concern for communities around the world, electric cooperatives in North Carolina and across the country are supporting efforts to bring power to rural communities abroad through NRECA International.

An offshoot of the cooperatives' national trade organization, NRECA International (nrecainternational.coop) works to develop and implement electrification programs to bring new opportunity to developing nations. Over the last 55 years, the organization has brought electricity access to more than 126 million people in 43 countries.

To accomplish this, hundreds of co-op leaders have traveled thousands of miles to help newly established power utilities across the globe, and lineworkers have banded together to build power lines to bring first-time power to people in remote communities. In the last 10 years, more than 700 volunteers from almost 200 co-ops traveled to 11 countries to support NRECA International's mission: To encourage economic growth and improve lives by expanding access to electric service.

The NRECA International team works with governments and funding agencies like the U.S. Agency for International Development to develop national electrification plans, collect and analyze data to determine the most cost-effective way to provide power to hard-to-reach populations, and also to design and construct distribution systems.

The first large group of volunteer lineworkers organized by NRECA International traveled in 2004 to the Dominican Republic to assist in storm power restoration efforts. Since then, numerous co-op employees have volunteered to assist in projects around the world. Today, NRECA International's popular volunteer program is rapidly growing. In addition to supporting ongoing projects in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, NRECA International identifies communities in Latin America that can benefit from electrification projects carried forth by America's electric co-ops.

Cooperative leaders recognize the value of playing a role in the next frontier of electrification—outside our borders.

"The U.S. electric co-op movement lifted rural American communities by providing life-changing opportunities for our grandfathers, and today we are reaping the benefits," said Nelle Hotchkiss, senior vice president of Association Services for North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives. "It is the co-op way to share our wealth of knowledge and skills to help the millions of people around the world who still live without access to electricity. Co-op volunteer lineworkers, who travel far to help, return to their families with a better understanding of the world around us, a greater appreciation for the co-op community and a clearer picture of their value to the community here at home."

NC Safety Campaign Featured at National Summit

(L to R) Steve Wehner, Don Gatton, Chris Walker and Farris Leonard at the 2018 Safety Leadership Summit in Atlanta.

The North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives' Job Training & Safety (JT&S) team was one of 20 organizations nationally selected to present at the 2018 Safety Summit in April, hosted in Atlanta by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The NC team used the opportunity to bring national attention to its "I WILL" safety initiative, created to make safety personal, create an emotional impact and emphasize personal accountability every day.

"The team was not only proud to represent North Carolina but to share an idea that we know will make a difference across the nation," said Manager of JT&S Field Services Farris Leonard. "There was great interest in the program as we shared our story. Many co-ops from other states asked how they could create such a program. The answer was very simple: Take our concept and personalize it to their cooperative. Involve employees, and most of all, make it about them."

The program was developed to address the rise in contacts and serious injuries among lineworkers in the state, which follows a national rising trend. The JT&S team's strategy became a purpose to make safety personal.

Eight safety promises were created to build the foundation of the program. Each safety promise begins with the simple but powerful words "I WILL" and contains key words such as accountable, focus, family and engage. These words together provide guidance to make the right decision daily.

CO-OP TECH:

From Pork to Power

A Harnett County hog farm hosts a new co-op microgrid

The new Butler Farms microgrid, dedicated in May, integrates renewable biogas, solar generation, energy storage and other components to produce electricity that can be used to power the farm and nearby homes.

Tom Butler didn't intend to build a microgrid.

He'd originally thought covering the waste lagoons at his nearly 100-year-old family hog farm in Lillington, North Carolina, would help mitigate some of the negative effects the facility may have had on the community.

Like most hog farms in North Carolina—the nation's fourth-largest hog producer—Butler Farms stores waste from livestock in a lagoon. A population of 7,500 to 8,000 swine creates about 9,000 gallons of waste a day. Covering the lagoons in 2008 greatly reduced odors from the farm, and Butler could use the captured methane to generate electricity. He consulted with his electric co-op, South River EMC in Dunn, in developing the local generation project.

"We're taking a waste product and making it an asset," he says. "It makes the waste a positive rather than a negative."

Nearly 10 years later, Butler began working with South River EMC and North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives to expand the project into something bigger: a functioning microgrid. The new system, dedicated in May, integrates renewable biogas, solar generation, energy storage and other components to produce electricity that can be used to power the farm and nearby homes.

During normal conditions, the microgrid will connect to South River EMC's distribution system to supplement and diversify traditional power resources. During outages, it can operate in "island mode" to power Butler Farms and surrounding homes.

"South River EMC has a long-standing partnership with Butler Farms, and we have taken great interest in their pursuit of cleaner farming techniques with less negative environmental impacts as well as the implementation of several renewable energy resources," said Catherine O'Dell, vice president of Member Services & Public Relations at South River Electric Membership Corporation.

The project will bring additional reliability to an already very reliable system in the local area. It also provides an opportunity to test the integration of new grid resources and technologies and serves as a case study for how agriculture and electric utilities—two of North Carolina's most important industries—can work together to enhance the state's rural communities.

"Electric cooperatives are rooted in our state's rural areas and are dedicated to finding innovative energy solutions like this that will not only provide reliable power, but also encourage economic development, promote environmental sustainability and improve quality of life in rural communities," said Joe Brannan, CEO of North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives. "This project helps us achieve all those goals by allowing us to collaborate with an agricultural partner to implement new technologies that leverage the opportunities and challenges faced by both industries."

Below left: The project includes a 250kW/735kWh battery system. Below right: South River EMC CEO Chris Spears (left) consults with Tom Butler.

"Electric cooperatives are rooted in our state's rural areas and are dedicated to finding innovative energy solutions like this."

The Butler Farms project is the second co-op microgrid in the state. Another microgrid in operation on Ocracoke Island was developed through a partnership between Tideland EMC and North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives (see "A First for the State," May 2017, page 8).

Cathy Cash, RE Magazine, contributed to this article.

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Alligators in North Carolina

Keep an eye out for these cousins to prehistoric creatures

By Donna Campbell Smith
Photos by Alligator Alliance

The first time Cheryl Woodring saw an alligator in Tyrell County, she and her husband, Danny, were on the way home from the Outer Banks. The Tideland EMC member knew people had seen alligators in the canals along US 64 near Manns Harbor. "Maybe we will see an alligator on our way home today," she told her husband.

"Of course, I was not serious and never expected to see one," Woodring says. "We had gone across the Alligator River Bridge when we came around a curve and there were all these cars stopped on the side of the road, and people were out looking at something across the canal! So, we did what everyone else was doing and we stopped...and there he was...laying up on the canal bank just loving the sunshine. I took several pictures and we went on our way. At that time, I had never see one just out in the wild like that."

American Alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*) can be found throughout the coastal regions of the Southeast, with North Carolina being their northernmost known habitat. They thrive in NC swamps, rivers, canals, tidal basins, and even ponds and lakes along the coastline and eastern inland regions. On occasion, they will venture out into the ocean—as was testified in June 2015 by two fishermen who photographed an alligator swimming just inside Oregon Inlet.

These creatures were almost obliterated from the state in the last century. But they've since made a comeback, and can now be found as far northwest as Gates County and south to the South Carolina border.

A bit about gators

Male alligators top out at 500-plus pounds and can grow to a length of 14 feet. Females are smaller, weighing up to 200 pounds and reaching a max of 10 feet (snout to tail tip). Alligators grow slower in North Carolina than those living further south because the weather is cooler, and the feeding season is shorter.

Alligators do not hibernate as mammals do; they "brumate." Being cold-blooded, they respond to the temperature of their environment. When it gets cold, they make a den or underground burrow and shut down. They don't go to sleep; if brumating in a burrow underwater they have to surface to breathe. As they brumate their metabolism slows, and they stop eating. Alligators have been observed sticking their snouts out of frozen water to breathe and sometimes become stuck in the ice. Once the ice melts they swim away. It is easy to see how these adaptable creatures have survived for millions of years.

The number of alligators in the state and their range is not fully known. For that reason, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission is asking people who see alligators to report their sightings. This "citizen science project" will help the commission answer the question, "where in North Carolina do people see alligators?" Visitors and residents of the state can upload their photos and a note about the location of the alligator to inaturalist.org/projects/nc-alligators.

Protection through education

John and Lisa McNeill founded the Alligator Alliance (alligatoralliance.com) to protect alligators in Brunswick County. Their primary tool is to educate the public.

The couple says they feel very fortunate to be able to observe alligators in the wild in our state and not just in a zoo or an aquarium. "We truly believe that alligators are our last living dinosaurs."

The McNeills remind us that as an indigenous species to North Carolina, alligators play an important role in our ecosystem.

Left: Albert the alligator

"Alligators are naturally afraid of humans and will avoid contact," they explain. "The ones that are not afraid are the ones that have been illegally fed. This creates what is referred to as a 'nuisance' or 'food-conditioned' alligator. When that happens, they lose their natural fear of humans and are often relocated or euthanized."

The McNeills continue: "For the most part, alligators are misunderstood. If we all use a common-sense approach, we can co-exist with them. This means, be aware that any body of water in our coastal regions has the potential to have an alligator in or near it. It also means stay away from them, do not feed or harass them and of course, keep children and pets away from them. If alligators are left alone they can exist as the wild animals they were intended to be, and we can all continue to enjoy these marvels of nature in their natural habitats. They have survived for millions of years and this is their home. If we educate, we won't have to relocate."

When people and alligators meet

Even though their numbers have increased, alligators are classified as a threatened species. It is illegal to harass or kill them. In fact, the penalty for killing an alligator is a hefty one: a $500 fine and/or 2 to 24 months in jail, plus a replacement cost of $4,313.

Seeing an alligator does not always mean it needs to be removed. Normally, according to wildlife experts, give it time and space and it likely will move on. But, if it is in a place that will cause danger to people, pets or livestock you should call a wildlife officer and let them do the removing.

Cases of alligators in the wrong places at the wrong time often make the news. Two such newsworthy stories in North Carolina include the 12-foot, 672-pound Dare County gator killed when a van hit it in May 2014. The van was damaged but drivable, the people in the van unhurt. It took heavy equipment to remove the dead alligator from the highway.

Another story that made the news happened in Swan Quarter, where a man found an eight-foot long alligator in his garage. He did the right thing and called the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and they sent an officer to remove it and return it to its natural habitat.

Why it is important to preserve alligators? Like all things in nature, they are part of the circle of life. They are important to the ecosystem of the coastal wet lands. They provide food for other species that eat their eggs and hatchlings. Their habit of digging dens into banks, ponds and lake bottoms provide other animals safe havens. In turn, alligators feed on and control populations of everything from insects to snakes, birds and small mammals.

Remember, if you see a wild alligator, watch and photograph it from a distance of at least 60 feet. Follow the safety rules and leave with a great memory.

Donna Campbell Smith is a Carolina Country contributing writer who lives in Franklin County.

John and Lisa McNeill founded their Alligator Alliance to protect alligators in Brunswick County.

Alligator Safety Tips and Regulations

- Keep pets on a leash and do not allow them to swim, drink or exercise in or near waters where alligators have been seen.
- Watch young children closely and never leave them unattended near any body of water.
- Be especially cautious in and around waters where alligators have been seen between dusk and dawn—times when alligators are most active.
- Never approach an alligator—no matter its size.
- Call 800-662-7137 to report an alligator near a home, business or disrupting traffic on a public road.

Visit bit.ly/ncwildlife-alligators for more tips on coexisting with alligators.

Source: NC Wildlife Resources Commission

Sobek the alligator hatchling

Take a Walk in the Park

Local havens offer easy outdoor escapes

By Joan Wenner

E. Carroll Joyner Park, Wake Forest

What is a cool and peaceful way to beat the heat and enjoy fresh air that doesn't cost anything? A walk in a park, of course! And North Carolina has plenty of them. We found the best quiet parks and nature trails in 15 towns across the state. Here are a few serene spots (listed roughly from west to east) in areas predominantly served by North Carolina's electric co-ops:

Waynesville | bit.ly/wsvillehikes

The 8-acre **Vance Street Park** includes a walking trail beside Richland Creek.

Marshall | madison.countync.org

Barnard Park marks the start of the classic whitewater rafting, canoeing and kayaking section of the French Broad River. The fishing spot also features a walking loop and picnic tables.

Forest City | townofforestcity.com

Florence Mill Park downtown is newly created and named for the historic Florence Mill; joins the popular **James F. Crowe Park** on Cherry Mountain Street, which has several large shelters that can be reserved for special events.

Winston-Salem | cityofws.org

Minutes from downtown, **Salem Lake Park's** 365-acre lake is often referred to as "the diamond" of the city's many parks. A 7-mile hiking trail offers scenic views of the lake. **Quarry Park** also has trails, seating and beautiful sightlines. **Lockland Park** features a shelter and playground.

Wadesboro | co.anson.nc.us

Little Park has all manner of athletic facilities and a swimming pool, but its quiet Loop Trail is a manicured 1.7 miles through the woods that connects to Fox Squirrel Trail for a total of 3 miles of trails, named for the creatures you may spot. The **Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge** north of town is an expansive waterfowl habitat.

Asheboro | ci.asheboro.nc.us

Park Street Park is less than an acre but offers a cozy wooded spot with picnic tables and grills; **Bicentennial Park** downtown features a fountain and a memory walk.

Sanford | leecountync.gov

San Lee Park sprawls over 177+ acres in Lee County, with hiking trails, two stocked lakes for fishing, picnic facilities and a nature center.

Hillsborough | visithillsboroughnc.com

River Park abuts the Eno River, perfect for strolling and picnicking, and is part of the popular **Riverwalk Greenway**, particularly attractive to visitors.

Fayetteville | visitfayettevillenc.com

Cape Fear River Park's 5-mile trail includes a boardwalk traversing marsh and wetlands; **Cross Creek Linear Park** is a winding greenway skirting downtown, winding through history sites. **Cape Fear Botanical Garden** (capefearbg.org) is a truly lovely setting, and a model railway will traverse the grounds through August 31. There's an admission fee, but it's worth it.

Wake Forest | bit.ly/wfhikes

H.L. Miller Park offers 2 acres of wooded greenspace behind Wake Forest Town Hall. North of town, **E. Carroll Joyner Park**, has 3 miles of paved walking trails around a pond, over creeks and through an old pecan grove. Restored farm structures include a log cabin, mule barn and tobacco barn.

Jaycee Park, Morehead City

River Park, Hillsborough

Burgaw | townofburgaw.com

Johnson Park has a gravel pathway, tree-shaded garden and grassy area; Burgaw Greenway Trail is a 2¾-mile loop along Osgood Canal connecting several wooded areas, including **Pecan Park** (in a pecan grove, with benches).

Jacksonville | jacksonvillenc.gov

Wilson Bay Park offers visitors a covered gazebo and a walk by the water. **Jacksonville Landing** offers boat ramps, a boardwalk and greenspace along the New River at Buddy Phillips Bridge.

Ahoskie | townofahoskie.ahoskie.org

Cardinal Park is a tranquil spot to see the town's tall clock and relax for a time. Also in the area is **Merchants Millpond State Park**.

Morehead City | moreheadcitync.org

Jaycee Park is a waterfront space with benches and picnic tables. Take a break on a bench swing at **Mitchell Village Community Park** for views of Bogue Sound and endless boat- and bird-watching.

Hatteras Village | bit.ly/hatterashikes

Gaze out at Pamlico Sound and enjoy cooling breezes from the southernmost community on Hatteras Island. Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative recommends the **Sea Breeze Trail** as a favorite serene and educational nature trail/park/walkway. The **Buxton Woods Trail**, near Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, offers views of the ocean through tranquil maritime forest.

Joan Wenner, J.D., is a longtime writer presently residing in Pitt County. Comments are welcomed at joan_writer@yahoo.com.

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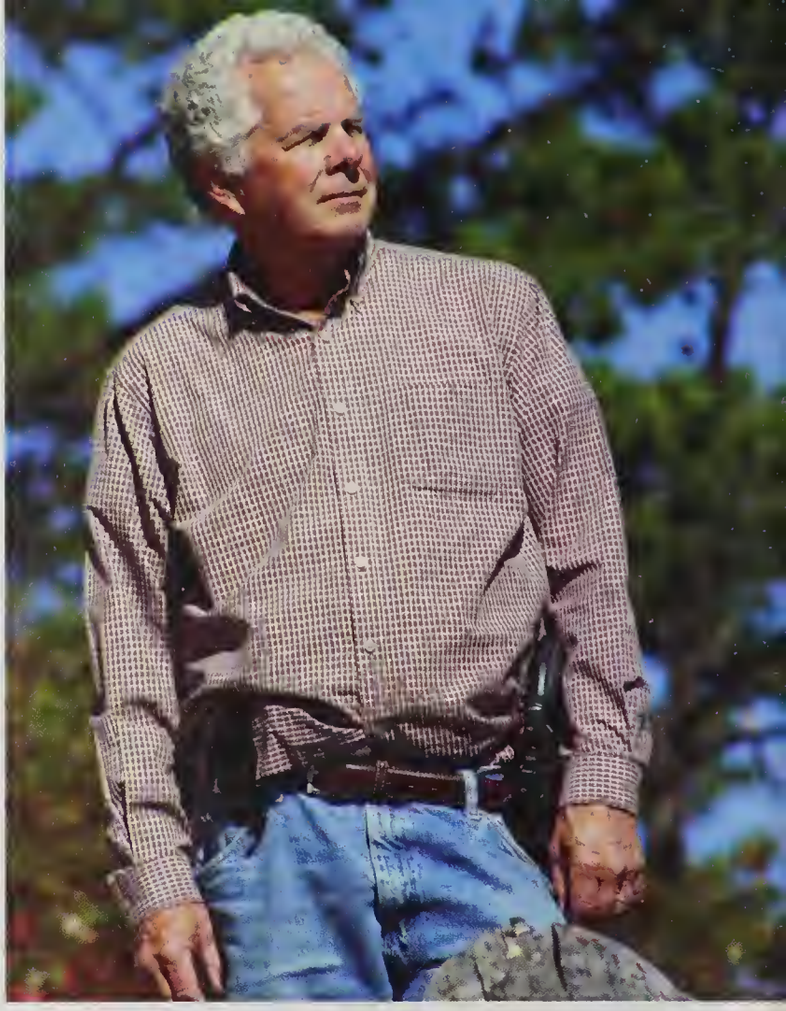
A Career in the Woods

Retired Forest Ranger C.W. Smith reflects on 34 years of service

Story and photo by Amy Trainum



As 73-year-old Clarence W. Smith—C.W. for short—stoically gazes out over the mountainous terrain that stretches out from Wiseman's View toward Hawksbill Mountain and Table Rock, he is deep in thought, reflecting, as his mind is flooded with memories of the forest he's dedicated most of his life to. When he looks down at the knotty pines below and the rocky river that jaggedly cuts through the landscape, he sees much more than just trees and a river—he sees places where he's had near-death experiences, or the site where he once rescued a young woman from drowning.

Those vivid memories are swiftly interrupted as a group of chatty out-of-towners approach the popular lookout point, trying to figure out what's what on the horizon full of peaks and cliffs. Without hesitation, Smith graciously offers insight and answers to their many questions. Like a proud parent showing off his child, Smith happily points out each and every landmark within view, adding in a riveting story or two about them all. Captivated by his stories, the visitors lean in closer to hear every detail the soft-spoken Smith has to share—and he has plenty to share, because Smith has seen and experienced both the natural beauty and unrelenting danger of this forest. For 34 years he lived and breathed this land.

During the three decades he patrolled the Grandfather Ranger District as a law enforcement officer for the U.S. Forest Service, Smith got to know the massive forest inside and out. All the stories he could tell about the mountains and all the things he's seen during his tenure could fill more than a few books—he's even witnessed the mysterious Brown Mountain Lights phenomenon (twice).

Throughout his entire career, no two days were ever exactly the same for Smith. Shifts could drag on for up to 16 grueling hours and were often unpredictable, because of the struggles that come along with being in open wilderness, including harsh weather conditions, rough terrain, rocky cliffs, rapidly moving rivers and wild animals. Then add in unexpected emergencies like wild fires, accidents or criminal activity. There were many times during his career where Smith thought: "What have I gotten myself into?" But he never thought twice before putting his life on the line to help protect the area and make sure the mountains were a clean, safe place for visitors.

"If it's your duty and you're out to protect the public and take care of them, then you just go right on out day after day and do whatever it takes," Smith says matter-of-factly.

Over the years, Smith has been involved in hundreds of search and rescue missions in the large district that spans close to 200,000 acres over five counties. Missions have ranged from saving drowning victims and finding lost hikers to recovering fatal plane crashes. He helped track wanted fugitives through the vast wilderness, including the manhunt for Olympic Park bomber Eric Rudolph. While most people would meticulously keep count of each and every rescue and high profile investigation, Smith is too humble for that. He's never kept count of exactly how many he's been involved in, modestly saying: "You don't count 'em, you just do 'em."

Despite all the danger and unpredictability, Smith says he wouldn't change a thing.

"I had a great career. I'd recommend it to anybody." Adding that the freedom of the job made it more than worth it, as well as "being able to get out in the fresh, pure air, and seeing something new every single day. I don't care how many degrees you have, there's always something new out there and you never get too old to learn. I still learn every day."

While Smith has been retired for almost 20 years and is enjoying retirement to the fullest, spending most of his time giving back to the community and helping those in need with his wife, Jennie, he's still a trusted source in the community for information regarding the forest and helps with investigations when he can. If you spend any amount of time with him, you'll notice he's always on watch for anything out of the ordinary or the chance to help a stranger.

"It's still in my blood," says Smith. "It's still my forest. It still seems like it's my job."

Amy Trainum lives in Charlotte. She is a freelance writer who focuses on travel, interesting people and places. You can read more of her work at southerndeparture.com.

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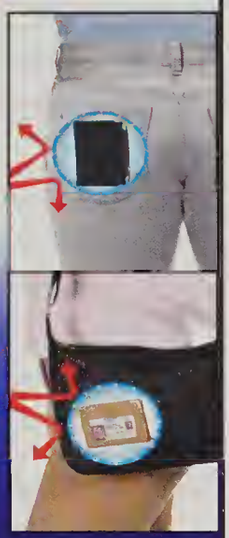

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Ahoy, there!

How to float your boat (even if you don't own one)

Looking to get away from stress this summer? The answer may be to leave your worries on land and take to the water. Four in five Americans say being around water relaxes them, and 72 percent feel healthier after spending time on the water, according to a Discover Boating survey.

For those who prefer to stay drier than those swimming, scuba diving, snorkeling and surfing, there is boating. You don't have to own a boat to go boating, either. There are several ways to get out on the water, no matter whether your interests lie in fishing, watersports, sailing, personal watercraft or simply cruising with loved ones. Use these tips to help you find a boat to float.

Join a boat club

Find a club near you to access a versatile fleet. You'll pay a monthly fee and be able to book your time on the water online. Most boat clubs take care of docking, cleaning and maintenance, with members responsible for fuel. Plus, most offer boat training courses as part of the membership.

Rent a boat

Rental options are available on most waterways and provide hourly, daily or weekly access to a variety of boat types. Rental outfitters give tutorials on operating a boat, share safety instructions and offer destination ideas. Another rental option new to market is peer-to-peer rentals, where you can locate boats online by entering your zip code, allowing you to rent someone else's boat, which usually includes insurance and captains for hire to help you set sail.

Charter a trip

Experience the boating lifestyle by chartering a boat trip with family or friends. Chartering offers several options—bareboat (with no captain) or crewed (with captain and crew)—and can be as short as a few days or weeks long. Pick your preferences and get your feet wet.

Take a class

Sign up for a boating lesson to hone your powerboating, sailing or watersports skills by mastering the basics while having fun along the way. On-water training courses, watersports camps, youth boating programs and more are offered across the U.S.

Chart a course to boat ownership

There's a boat selector and loan calculator tool to help determine your budget and identify types of boats that fit your interests at discoverboating.com. Once you've narrowed down your search, the site can connect you with manufacturers whose boats best fit your needs and wants. The site also has a "Go Boating Today" interactive tool where you can enter your zip code to find local boat clubs, rentals or charters.

—Brandpoint

NC Boating Resources

Boaters can explore more than 5,000 miles of North Carolina waters, according to the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. Its website provides information for boaters, including maps, laws, recommendations, a list of boating education classes and an interactive locator for where to find free public boating access areas.

Visit ncwildlife.org/boating for details.

How to be Happy

Six skills are linked to increasing happiness for all ages

How would you describe happiness? You may have trouble putting it into words, but you know you want it for yourself and your loved ones. One thing that's harder than describing it for many people is knowing how to achieve it.

Researchers studying social emotional well-being define happiness as a balance: the combination of how frequent and robust your positive emotional experiences are, how gracefully you recover from difficult experiences, and how meaningful and worthwhile you feel your life is overall.

"Happiness is the ability to consistently recognize that life is good, even if it's difficult," said Dr. Emiliana Simon-Thomas, Ph.D., science director of the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California Berkeley. "It's being able to identify and enjoy the positive times but also have resiliency to bounce back from the hard times."

It's important for everyone, but particularly youth. Research shows two out of three American teens are stressed and many don't know how to cope. When school is in session, teens are the most stressed group in the country. The inability to reduce and cope with stress and anxiety can negatively impact different facets of a teen's life, including their health, friendships, relationships with parents and academic performance.

To help further the idea that happiness skills can be learned, Simon-Thomas identified six Sustainable Happiness Skills that provide the foundation for an initiative called Life's Good: Experience Happiness. The platform aims to reach, teach and increase sustainable happiness. It focuses on youth, but anyone can benefit from reviewing and practicing these skills. You can learn more about the initiative at lgexperiencehappiness.com. The six skills are:

> Happiness is the ability to consistently recognize that life is good, even if it's difficult.

1 Mindfulness
Being aware of your thoughts and feelings in the present moment, without judging those thoughts or feelings as admirable, shameful or anything in between.

2 Human connection
Building and sustaining relationships with significant others, friendships and social engagement with peers, which is the most reliable, enduring predictor of happiness in life.

3 Positive outlook
Harnessing the ability to imagine a fruitful outcome and maintain a readiness to pursue and experience the opportunity in any circumstance.

4 Purpose
Understanding your ability to make a difference in the world, at work, school or for a team, leads to a refined sense of purpose and increases your sense of happiness.

5 Generosity
Helping and giving to others can increase one's own happiness. According to a study overseen by Harvard University, people who donated time or money were 42 percent more likely to be happy when compared to those who didn't.

6 Gratitude
The simple act of appreciating and thanking others for the goodness they contribute to your life helps foster happiness.

—Brandpoint

Your Outdoor Oasis

Consider theme when creating a personalized shed

Perhaps you wish for a creative retreat, a place where you can paint, write and pursue other hobbies, or maybe you want a cozy second living room to spend quality time with your friends and family.

Think sheds. No, not a dusty shed filled with discarded garden tools and stiff, 30-year-old paint brushes. We're talking personalized sheds, intimate covered spaces that serve as places to pursue hobbies, rejuvenate, retreat or socialize.

Outdoor sheds come in all shapes, sizes and can be personalized to reflect a variety of themes. From fun-filled "tapsheds," where friends gather for mojitos and grilled fish, to an intimate "she shed" stocked with wine and cheese or even a hobby shed for the family to play cards and board games, sheds can cover it all.

Consider these tips to help you create your ideal outdoor oasis:

Have a plan: Are you starting from scratch and building one or reinventing an existing shed? What's the budget? What's the goal? How much room do you have to work with? You may be eager to jump right in, but it's actually easier to follow a plan than to decide on the fly.

Stick to a theme: Do you want a craft shed, a relaxation shed, a party shed? Figure out your theme and tailor decisions around it. For example, if you decide to go with a relaxation shed, choose calming colors, such as light shades of green and blue and bring in a good reading chair or rocker. Decorations and accessories should be peaceful, such as a tabletop fountain and wind chimes. Conversely, if you want your shed to be a social hub, select more vibrant shades and colors for an upbeat atmosphere.

Utilize your resources: Utilize all the free beauty that your property has to offer. Build your shed under your favorite tree to offer natural shade or decorate your existing shed with vines from your backyard.

Less is more: When designing an outdoor shed, it is easy to go overboard with spending. Keeping things minimal will also ensure you stay within your budget. (This is especially important if you are already trying to get rid of clutter in your main home. If so, why bring more clutter into your sanctuary?)

Think storage: When working with a small area, you can expand usable space by adding a wall-mounted cabinet to contain items. Ottomans with storage inside can do double-duty, too, by letting you put your feet up while storing books and magazines.

A custom exterior: A quick way to customize your shed is with a coat or two of paint. You can use one color or combine several and you can go laid-back or bold (it's your shed, remember?). Invite friends and family over for a day of painting and reward them with cold beverages and tasty snacks.

—Brandpoint

What kind of shed are you?
To take an easy quiz to find out your "shed personality," visit bit.ly/hpba-shedquiz.

carolinacountry.com/sheds
Our readers have created some truly impressive sheds! See these "amazing sheds" and read the stories behind each.

Be the Grill Hero

Master your next cookout with these ribs and kabobs

Nothing brings people together like a cookout. There is something about being outdoors and the delicious aroma of grilling that makes you want to gather with family and friends. For those grilling novices, a few tips can help ensure success:

1 Start with a clean grill.
Take the time to clean your grates before each meal—last week's charring can make meat taste bitter.

2 Invest in great meat.
Choose versatile, high-quality and tender cuts such as ribs, chops and tenderloins.

3 Cut down on time, not flavor.
Look for pre-seasoned meats, or slice, dice or cube larger cuts like boneless loin to shorten cook time and increase flavor.

4 Heat it right.
Use direct heat for burgers and chops, and indirect heat for larger cuts like ribs.

The ribs recipe here uses charcoal and the kabobs recipe uses a gas grill or smoker. Find more summer grilling recipes at smithfieldgetgrilling.com.

—FamilyFeatures.com

Pineapple Pork Kebabs

- ½ boneless pork loin
- 1 sweet onion, cut into 1 to 1½-inch square pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into 1 to 1½-inch square pieces
- 2 cups pineapple chunks
- 3–4 tablespoons barbecue rub
- 2½ cups teriyaki marinade
- 3–4 flexible skewers

Heat grill or smoker to 250 degrees. Cut pork loin into 2-inch cubes.

Season pork loin, sweet onion, red bell pepper and pineapple chunks with barbecue rub.

Thread pork loin, onion, pepper and pineapple on skewer; repeat until length of skewer is almost full. Repeat with additional skewers.

Put assembled kebabs in large re-sealable bag and add teriyaki marinade. Carefully remove air from marinade bag and refrigerate 20 minutes.

Remove kebabs from marinade bag and place on grill over indirect heat; cook 12 to 14 minutes, remove and set aside.

Increase grill temperature to 400 F. Sear kebabs at high heat, until caramelized. Using meat thermometer, check pork loin cubes for doneness; remove from heat once pork reaches internal temperature of 145 degrees.

Yield: 3 to 4 servings

St. Louis Ribs with Cocoa Dry Rub

- 7 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 4 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground coffee
- 2½ teaspoons unsweetened dark cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- ¾ teaspoon ancho chile pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon coriander
- ⅛ teaspoon turmeric
- 2 racks pork spareribs, membrane removed

Build a charcoal fire for indirect cooking by situating coals on one side of grill, leaving other side empty. Heat grill to 250 degrees.

For dry rub, in small bowl combine salt, brown sugar, chili powder, coffee, cocoa, black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, ancho chile pepper, coriander and turmeric.

Generously apply dry rub onto front and back of pork ribs. Gently pat to ensure rub adheres to the ribs.

Put ribs meat-side up over indirect heat, away from coals, close lid and cook until ribs are tender, about 3½ hours.

Remove ribs from grill and let rest, uncovered, 5 minutes. Slice ribs between bones and serve.

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

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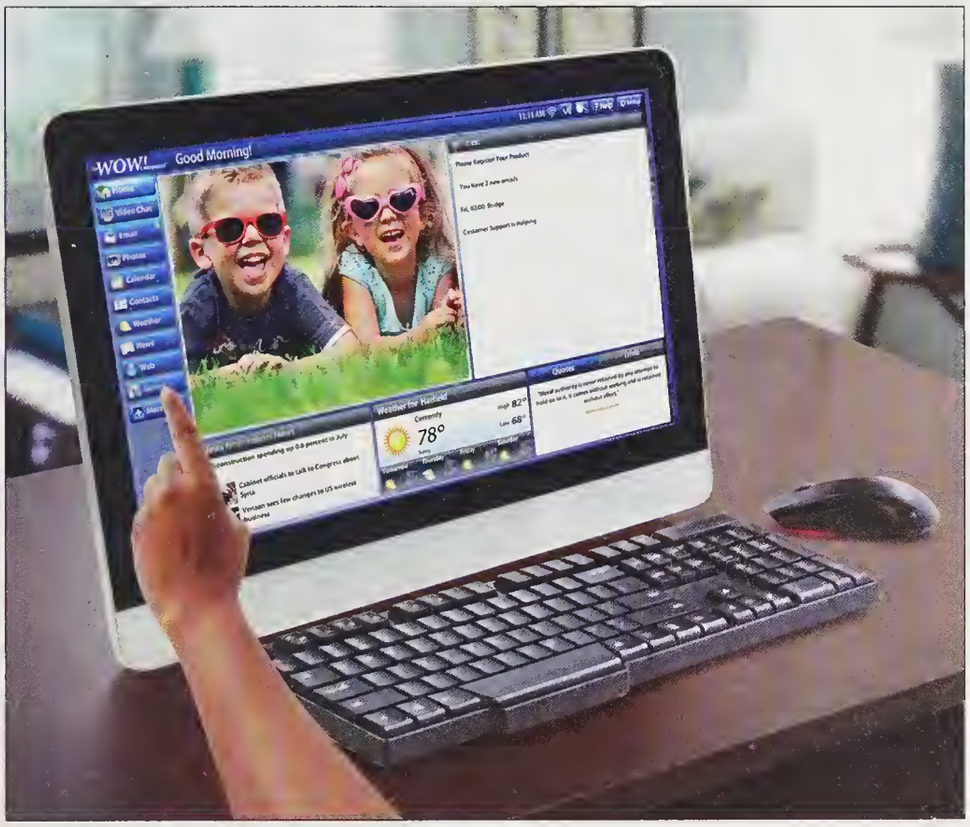

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– Janet F.

Have you ever said to yourself "I'd love to get a computer, if only I could figure out how to use it." Well, you're not alone. Computers were supposed to make our lives simpler, but they've gotten so complicated that they are not worth the trouble. With all of the "pointing and clicking" and "dragging and dropping" you're lucky if you can figure out where you are. Plus, you are constantly worrying about viruses and freeze-ups. If this sounds familiar, we have great news for you. There is finally a computer that's designed for simplicity and ease of use. It's the WOW Computer, and it was designed with you in mind. This computer is easy-to-use, worry-free and literally puts the world at your fingertips.

From the moment you open the box, you'll realize how different the WOW Computer is. The components are all connected; all you do is plug it into an outlet and your high-speed Internet connection. Then you'll see the screen – it's now 22 inches. This is a completely new touch screen system, without the cluttered look of the normal computer screen. The "buttons" on the screen are easy to see and easy to understand. All you do is touch one of them, from the Web, Email, Calendar to Games– you name it... and a new screen opens up. It's so easy to use you won't have to ask your children or grandchildren for help. Until now, the very people who could benefit most from E-mail and the Internet are the ones that have had the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the WOW Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn't it time you took part? Call now, and you'll find out why tens of thousands of satisfied seniors are now enjoying their WOW Computers, emailing their grandchildren, and experiencing everything the Internet has to offer. Call today!

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My Adventures with 'Granny Good'

By Reggie Hill

What are the things that a young boy remembers—the smell of a farm pond full of fish in the springtime or stalking all kinds of "big game" through broom straw with his trusty BB gun? Seeing a bevy of UFOs whizzing by the moon at nightfall (which were probably Canada geese in migration)?

Granny Good sitting under a tree near the author's seven-acre lake.

All of these wonders are enough to burn indelible prints into the mind of a country boy in the South.

The most undying memory in this boy's life was his adventures with his maternal grandmother—affectionately known to him as "Granny Good." Granny Good was a robust woman, overweight as grandmothers were in those days. Full of energy, ready, willing and able to pursue adventures with a little boy who worshipped her. Granny Good had what we like to call today a "presence" about her. She had stark white hair that lay close to her head like a thousand tight little springs. Her hands were rough and brown from decades of honest, hard labor. She always wore patterned dresses while working. Pink was definitely her favorite color. To this day when I see pink I think of Granny Good, sweating profusely year-round.

She could turn a laugh into a miracle. The laugh would begin at her mouth and end up oscillating down to her huge tummy, which would reverberate like pink Jell-O. The poor lady had crippling arthritis, but it didn't slow her down. She would hobble along on bowed legs with a speed that would cause a young boy to break into a stride.

My fondest memory of this wonderful human being was during my days as a mad scientist. My Dad had built a little building behind our home called the "doll house." To this day I don't know where the name came from. Maybe it was built for my little sister, but I don't remember ever seeing any dolls in it. What I do remember seeing, in this wonderful little hideaway, were rows upon rows of chemicals—my chemicals—from which I created all manner of wonders for myself and my little sister.

I soon graduated to the ultimate creation: I could make gunpowder! Now mind you, my goal with gunpowder was not one of destruction, but construction. You see, I wanted to build rockets. Rockets that would soar into the sky to the absolute amazement of me, my sister and my neighborhood chums.

I pored over every book I could find on model rocketry. I learned the secrets of nozzle diameter versus chamber diameter. Very important stuff if you wanted your rocket not to fizzle—or worse yet, become a bomb! I did have one bomb incident early in my rocket research and development phase. I remember lighting the fuse, running like a fiend, turning and looking in horror as my little sister and our cousin toddled over to inspect it. I dashed over, grabbed the rocket and ran away from them. The next thing I remember was the doctor cleaning the cut on my face. He looked at me, smiled and said, "You can tell everyone you got the scar in a duel in Heidleburg." I figure Heidleburg or not, I earned it honorably.

There was only one flaw in this grand scheme of creation: I needed adult supervision. Thus enters, stage right, Granny Good. I proposed my plan to the jovial matriarch and without hesitation she accepted. Like the knight she was, Granny Good rose to the occasion in splendid style. She called forth from the depths of Grandpa's barn the farm's worthy, old, WWII flaming red Willys Jeep. We dutifully christened it our fire command vehicle.

With this Jeep, Granny Good and I tore through the woods and fields of her farm with a commitment and purpose of mission that would have brought tears to General Patton's eyes. On a typical firing day, I would scurry from the Jeep, erect the rocket on its platform, and stretch the wires back to the Jeep where Granny Good waited with a trusty 12-volt auto battery "borrowed" from my Dad's service station. On my command, my missile fire control officer (aka Granny Good) would deftly touch the naked ends of the wires to the terminals of the battery. Whoosh! Another rocket soared skyward.

To this day, I can still hear my Granny Good cackling in delight as our rockets soared heavenward. Whether or not my rockets made it all the way to heaven, I'll never know. I do know this, however: if there is a heaven, which I know there is, my Granny Good is up there looking down on me with that wonderful look that only she could give to a little boy.

Reggie and his wife, Anita, have made their home at Lakewood (featured in his book "Lakewood: Reggie and Anita's Camelot") in the Red Cross community for 37 years. They are proud members of Union Power Cooperative.

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65-69	$20.50	$16.00	$33.50	$26.00	$66.00	$51.00	$163.50	$126.00
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July events

Downtown Parade
July 4, Boone

MOUNTAINS

Downtown Parade
July 4, Boone
828-268-6280
joneshouse.org

Liberty Parade & Concert
July 4, Todd
828-263-6173
toddnc.org

Antique Auto Show
July 6–7, Fletcher
828-558-1733
mountaineerantiqueautoclub.com

4th of July Festival
Games, live music
July 7, Blowing Rock
828-295-5222
blowingrock.com

An Evening with the Isaacs
Special guest Ricky Skaggs
July 6, Franklin
866-273-4615
greatmountainmusic.com

An Evening with the Isaacs
Special guest Larry Gatlin & The Gatlin Brothers
July 7, Franklin
866-273-4615
greatmountainmusic.com

Art on the Greene
Crafts, food
July 7–8, Banner Elk
828-387-0581
bannerelk.com

Highland Games
Scottish music, athletics
July 12–15, Linville
828-733-1333
gmhg.org

Mountain Voices
Music by the decade
July 13, Franklin
866-273-4615
greatmountainmusic.com

Quilt Show
Silent auction
July 13–14, Sparta
336-359-2111
alleghanyquiltersguild.com

Angela Easterling & The Beguilers
Summer Concert Series
July 14, Todd
828-263-6173
toddnc.org

Art in the Park
Jewelry, photography
July 14, Blowing Rock
828-295-7851
blowingrock.com

Art Studios Tour
July 21, Asheville
828-253-7651
grovewood.com

Historic Homes Tour
July 21, Flat Rock
828-698-0030
historicflatrockinc.com

Cyclo.Via
Human-powered fun
July 22, Boone
828-266-1345
boonecyclovia.weebly.com

Symphony Performance
July 27, Blowing Rock
828-295-7851
symphonybythelake.com

Tour of Homes
Lunch, tag sale
July 27, Blowing Rock
828-295-3217
blowingrock.com

ONGOING

An Appalachian Summer Festival
Music, theatre, dance
July 1–31, Boone
800-841-2787
appsummer.org

100th Anniversary Street Dances
Mondays starting July 9, Hendersonville
800-828-4244
visithendersonvillenc.org

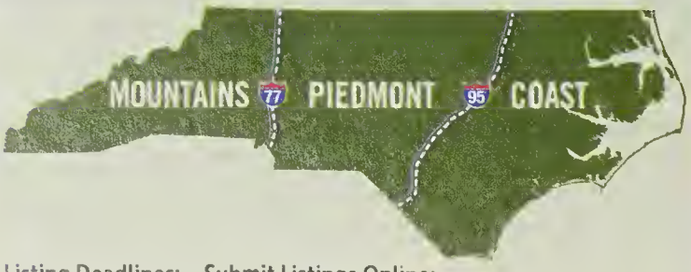
Clay+
Artist Cynthia Bringle
July 14–Aug. 18, Spruce Pine
828-682-7215
toeriverarts.org

Godspell
Musical about Jesus' life
July 28–Aug. 11, Burnsville
828-682-4285
parkwayplayhouse.com

PIEDMONT

Independence Celebration
Food trucks, games
July 1, Smithfield
919-934-0887
bit.ly/fb_smithfield-celebration

carolinacountry.com/calendar
See more events online with photos, descriptions, maps and directions.



Listing Deadlines:
For Sept.: July 25
For Oct.: Aug. 25

Submit Listings Online:
carolinacountry.com/calendar
(No email or U.S. Mail.)

Independence Concert
July 1, Fayetteville

Independence Concert
July 1, Fayetteville
910-433-4690
fayettevillesymphony.org

July 4th Celebration
July 4, Hope Mills
910-426-4110
townofhopemills.com

4th of July Celebration
July 4, Fort Bragg
910-396-9126
bragg.armymwr.com

Celebration at Creekside Park
Pony rides, live music
July 4, Archdale
336-434-1117
christine.fattorusso@heartofnorthcarolina.com

Market & Music
Band, food trucks
July 13, Randleman
336-626-0364
cityofrandleman.com

Christmas in July
Kiln openings, crafts
July 13–15, Seagrove
336-873-7966
melpotter@embarqmail.com

July Celebration
Amusement rides
July 14, Liberty
336-622-4276
christine.fattorusso@heartofnorthcarolina.com

African World Peace Festival
Gospel concert
July 14–15, Fayetteville
910-728-2186
africanpeacefestival.org

ONGOING

Stepping into the Craft
Demos, mini-classes
Saturdays, Seagrove
336-879-4145
discoverseagrove.com

Common Ground
Varied arts
July 23–Aug. 26, Hillsborough
919-732-5001
hillsboroughgallery.com

COAST

4th of July Festival
Crafts, car show
July 2–4, Southport
910-457-5578
nc4thofjuly.com

Independence Day Celebration
Sand sculpture, car show
July 3–4, Ocracoke Island
252-928-6711
visitocracokenc.com

July 4th Celebration
Food, Uncle Sam
July 3–4, Belhaven
252-933-3770
belhavenchamber.com

Sunday in the Park
Summer Concert Series
July 8, Greenville
252-329-4567
greenvillenc.gov

Art Show
Crafts, prints
July 19, Avon
252-305-2220
hollowdazesurfdesigns@gmail.com

Pro Rodeo
July 20–22, Newport
252-223-4019
newportfleamall.com

ONGOING

Concerts at Fort Macon
July 7–27, Atlantic Beach
252-726-3775
friendsoffortmacon.org

Know Before You Go
In case something changes after Carolina Country goes to press, check information from the contact listed.

Carolina MUSIC

JULY'S FEATURED TRACK

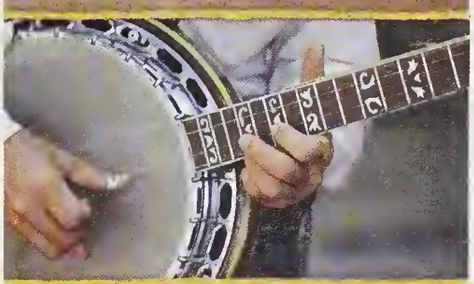
"I Like Where This Is Going"

By Brittany McLamb

Contemporary country artist Brittany McLamb brings her powerhouse vocals to her fun anthem about enjoying the here and now of a new love. Growing up in Sampson County she was immersed in gospel, bluegrass and country music from a young age, and sang in her church's youth choir. After graduating from East Carolina University in Greenville, she moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to pursue a music career, where she continues to write, perform and record songs.

carolinacountry.com/music
Listen to this and past featured tracks from North Carolina musicians.

SMALL SURPRISES



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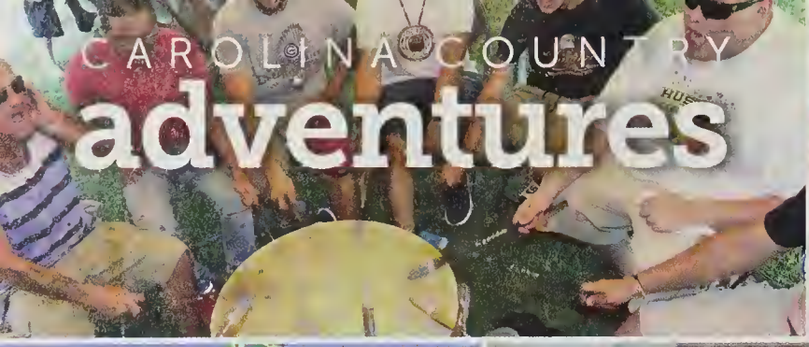
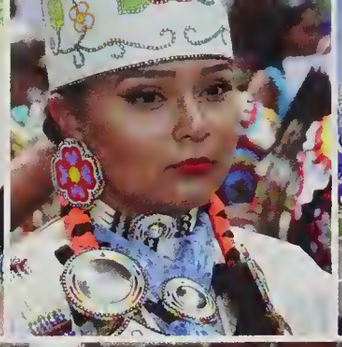

Pride and Unity at the Lumbee Homecoming

Cultural celebration marks its 50th anniversary this year

By Gordon Byrd

The brilliant blue sky and vernal green of the trees and grass are mirrored perfectly in the traditional dress of the Lumbee Nation, gathered for last year's Lumbee Homecoming. Every summer, the small town of Pembroke is flooded with more than 40,000 Lumbee Indians. The small rural town, home to UNC Pembroke, is annually spun into a buzz with golf carts, street vendors, parades, a Powwow, beauty pageants and countless other events throughout the week of Lumbee Homecoming.

"My family from all over the U.S.A. comes home to visit. Lumbee Homecoming is all about family," says Joseph Bell, MD, of Pembroke Pediatrics. "Nobody misses this. Truly, it is the social, cultural event of the year. It's priceless."

The sun is high as a westbound train rolls past the UNCP campus. The whistle acts as a signal to begin the parade from the university to the library across town. The mile-long route is lined with lawn chairs, parked golf carts, and thousands of tailgate tents. Onlookers are well-equipped and prepared for the hours of floats, Sudan Temple go-karts, and congressional campaign signs. Children eagerly dart out to lift hard candy from the hot streets and collect them in their grandparents' pockets.

Later, the tents will be put up and the crowd will wander to the university lawn, where elaborately decorated Native American dancers perform at the outdoor Powwow. Among the viewers, Clayton Maynor, currently living in Rocky Mount, mingles among old friends and myriads of impromptu artisanal shops.

"This is more than just a reunion for me," Maynor says. "I can enjoy the family, friends, and food; but also this is where everybody I went to Purnell Swett High School with is going to be. This is home."

Jordan McGirt, a math teacher at that same high school, Purnell Swett, and a recent graduate from UNCP's School of Education, displays his creative side as an art vendor. His friend, Madi, assists would-be art patrons with questions about McGirt's digital art. This is her first homecoming and, besides overwhelming, the experience is unique.

"This is a time for the community to come together and celebrate," McGirt says. "What better chance to share our culture with one another and new members."

The sheer number of people, golf carts, and dreamcatchers is breathtaking. At the beginning of the University's fall semester, Pembroke's population swells by 200 percent. During homecoming, Pembroke grows by more than 1,200 percent. Streets that rarely see traffic are jammed with loyal members of the state-recognized Lumbee Tribe. Parking is scarce, but that doesn't slow any of the festivities. Rather than driving a car to town, most people bring their family from out of town onto Main Street riding on golf carts.

This year's event is due to be highlighted with exceptional fireworks, a car show, and the return of the renowned Collard Sandwich and Grape Ice Cream. (This dynamic duo of deliciousness delivers a quintessential aspect of the allure the Lumbee Homecoming.)

Most notably, this year's Lumbee Homecoming will mark the 50th anniversary of the celebration since its historic beginnings at the Cultural Center in Pembroke—serving as a celebration of pride and heritage for the Lumbee people. C

Gordon Byrd is a veteran who works for UNC Pembroke. He tries to keep things interesting with a little homebuilding, some writing, triathlons and time with family and church.

2018 Lumbee Homecoming

Main events: June 29–July 7, Pembroke
910-521-8602
lumbeehomecoming.com

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The winner, chosen at random and announced in our August issue, will receive $25.

Have a roadside gem you'd like to share? Submit a photo, plus a brief description and general location information, at carolinacountry.com/where.

June winner

The June Where Is This photo from Rutherford EMC member Kathy Wise features the June Bug Farms barn on June Bug Road in the Vale Community just outside of Lincolnton. According to Wise, the barn was built in 1929. In 1997, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and the NC State Fair recognized the farm as a "Century Farm." The farm has remained in the Abernathy family for more than 100 years, with Robert and Kathy Abernathy Wise's son Robbie now running the farm. The winning entry chosen at random from all the correct submissions came from Debbie Gilbert of Lincolnton, a Rutherford EMC member.

CAROLINA COUNTRY

scenes

photo of the month

Pink Lady Slipper

As an employee of Mount Jefferson State Natural Area, I see the natural beauty of Creation on a daily basis. This photo of a Pink Lady Slipper was taken just as the sun was cresting the ridge

Greg Baldwin, Lansing,
A member of Blue Ridge Energy

The Photo of the Month comes from those who scored an honorable mention from the judges in our 2018 photo contest ("Carolina Country Scenes," January 2018). See even more Photos of the Week on our website carolinacountry.com.

Steve Jones of Frisco, far right, gives a few clamming pointers to the author's family and others before a clamming trip in Pamlico Sound.

A Different Kind of Fishing

Clamming is a delight and provides great table fare

By Mike Zlotnicki

When people head to the coast and go "fishing," most assume it's for any of the myriad species of finfish that inhabit our coastal waters, and I was one of those for many years. (I still try to pack a spinning outfit on family vacations.)

In recent years our family has tried to time summer vacations at the Outer Banks with two of my old fraternity brothers and their families. With nine children between us and the help of another old friend, Steve Jones, we found clamming to be an ideal outdoor activity.

I met Steve in the '80s when he was tending bar in Chapel Hill. After moving back to Frisco, he mated on charter boats and ran the Chaser charter boat out of Oden's Dock until 2008. Now he tends bar at Dinky's Waterfront Restaurant in Hatteras, but his 35 years of mating and guiding have given him a wealth of knowledge.

He suggested a clamming trip a few years ago and donated his time and boat to take us out. It's since become a tradition for our three families.

Family friendly

Clamming is not hard, which makes it ideal for young children as kind of an aquatic Easter egg hunt. For Steve, back when he was guiding part time, clamming checked a few other boxes as well.

"Typically, I'd take a family with a couple of kids," he says. "It was a whole lot easier than a finfish trip for me. Clams don't move like fish. We would just pull up on a shoal, anchor the boat and go at it."

And it's as simple as that. We did use commercially-made clam rakes, but a garden rake or a three-tined cultivator will work in a pinch. One simply rakes (or pushes the rake) until you feel a little "thunk," and it's usually either a clam or a rock. Steve explains that you can pretty much walk into a sandy shoal on the sound side and have a reasonable chance of collecting some clams. His favorite shoals are all within a two-mile radius of each other and 200 to 600 yards from shore.

One of the bonus points of clamming is that you will see many other aquatic (and avian) species. My wife Renee once raked up a horseshoe crab that gave her quite a start. We've seen rays, skates, crabs, whelks and various species of fish on our trips.

Enjoying the catch

Once back to the house, we purge them in salt water to release any sand, and steam them up. We use the smaller clams for cooking and freeze the larger clams in the shell for chowder later.

Raking up a clam may not have the excitement of catching a puppy drum or bluefish in the sound, but clamming serves a family well for a fun and safe saltwater activity.

Mike Zlotnicki is associate editor at Wildlife in North Carolina magazine. He lives in Garner with his wife, three daughters and two German shorthaired pointers.

Down East Clam Chowder

Recipe courtesy of NC Sea Grant (ncseagrant.ncsu.edu)

- 1 quart coarsely chopped chowder clams, with their juice
- ¼ pound salt pork, sliced
- 1 quart water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 cups diced potatoes
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 cup instant potato flakes for thickening (optional)

In large saucepan, fry pork over medium heat until crisp. Remove pork and discard.

Add clams, water, onion, salt and pepper to pan. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and cook slowly until clams are tender, about 1½ hours.

Add potatoes and onion, and cook until potatoes are done, about 20 minutes. Add potato flakes and simmer until thickened, about 5 minutes.

Yield: 10 to 12 servings

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Energy Considerations for Pet Doors

By Hannah McKenzie

Q: I am considering installing a cat door so my cat can come and go as she pleases, rather than waking me during the night to go outside. I see several green and energy efficient products online, but I'm suspicious of their claims. How do I choose a good cat door and prevent as much air loss as possible?

A: Interrupted sleep from pets can be annoying, so a quality pet door might be a decent solution that is worth the extra energy lost.

Assuming your ceilings and floors are adequately air-tight, a tightly closing pet door would not be a huge energy drain. Like a single-pane glass window, it will keep out pests and outdoor air but not likely be an energy efficient feature. For homes with lots of air leaking through the ceilings and floors, a pet door, especially a leaky one, may increase your monthly energy bill and add a noticeable breeze. Pet doors range in quality and price—from $6 to $2,000—including questionable "green" options, and no consistent testing method exists for identifying the products that best limit air loss.

Location

Pet doors are most often installed in human doors and sometimes through walls. There is not a huge difference with regard to energy. Some people hope that installing two pet doors through a wall will act like double-pane glass, but testing hasn't shown this to always work. If you are the creative type, an air-lock entry system like you see at hospitals, hotels and grocery stores would limit air loss. This means two entry doors with a foyer space between them or a high-speed fan that blows across the opening to prevent indoor and outdoor air exchange. Perhaps a simpler option is having a pet door lead to your garage or screened porch so Fluffy can roam with safety from coyotes and tomcats.

Design

Select a door design that closes snugly to limit air leaking and rodents or bugs entering. Even better are pet doors with latches or covers for times when you don't want Fluffy (and air) coming and going as she pleases. Some doors have a computerized latch linked to a microchip under your pet's skin or on your pet's collar to prevent other neighborhood critters from coming to visit.

Other considerations

"Greenwashing" (bogus claims about energy savings) is rampant in pet door advertisements. Carefully consider product reviews and be ruthless when analyzing product features. One pet door manufacturer claims that the three inches of air space between its two door flaps provide "heavy-duty insulation." I beg to differ.

In addition to energy loss, pet doors can create other hassles...or entertaining stories. My neighbor recently found a raccoon helping itself to cat food in her kitchen. The pictures were a hoot (mostly because it wasn't my kitchen)! Freshly killed game and muddy paws can also make their way inside.

Instead of pet door mishaps, consider pet training books and online videos as other options. If a service animal can open and close doors, maybe your pooch can too. Would an automatic feeder set to 4 a.m. satisfy your frisky alarm clock? Perhaps Smokey learns to use a human toilet and doesn't wake you for outdoor bathroom breaks? So many possibilities to get more sleep.

Hannah McKenzie is a building science consultant for Advanced Energy in Raleigh.

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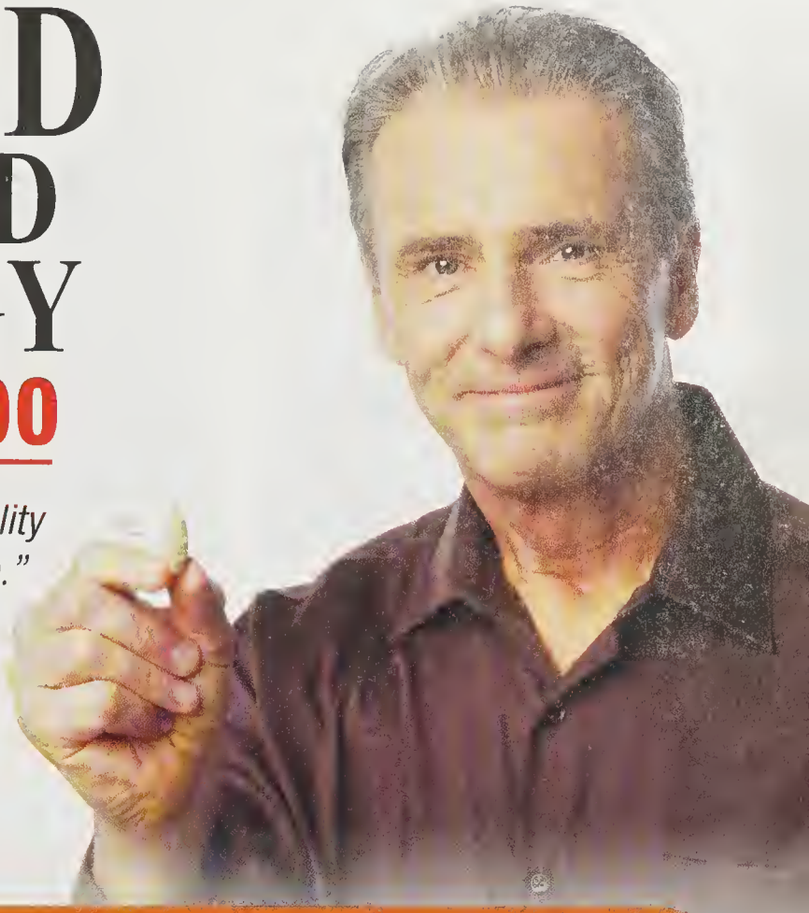

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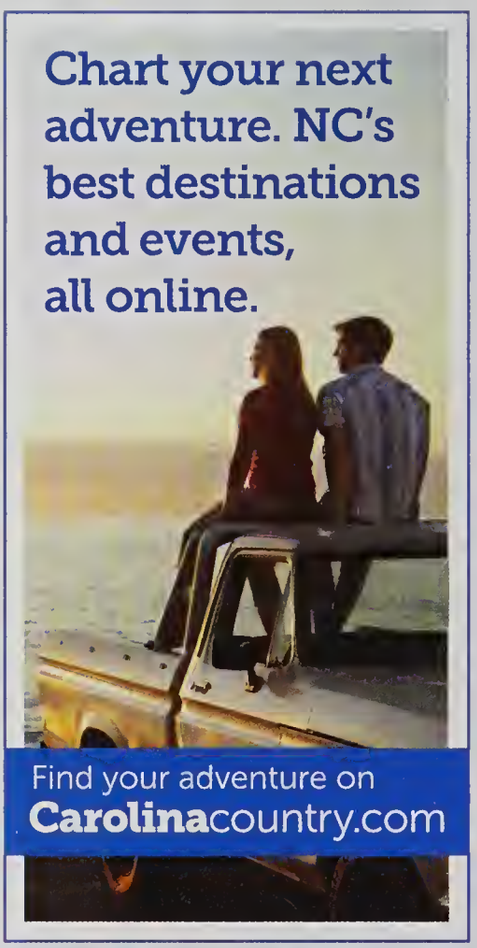
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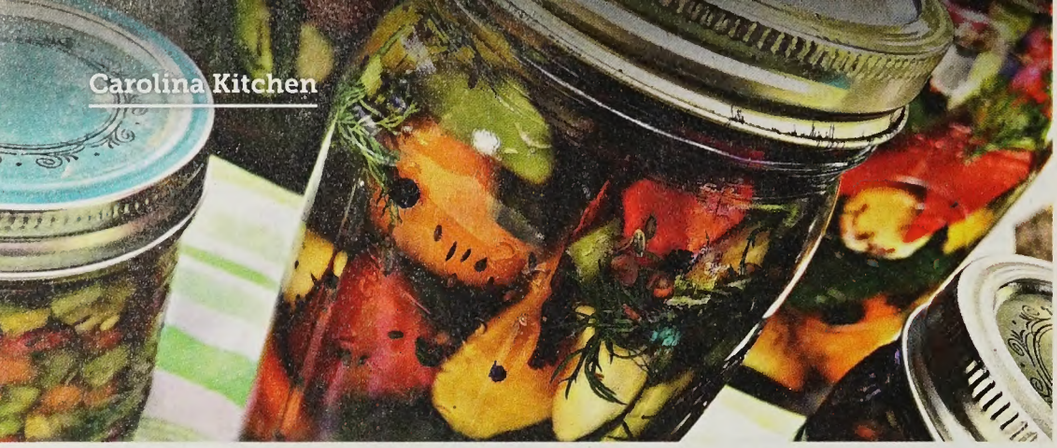

Scratch-Made Fire & Ice Pickled Peppers

Many of us have made traditional "fire and ice" pickles using store-bought dill pickles. Our twist is a fast way to use those summer peppers that seem to come from every which way all at once...no processing, just refrigerate, eat and share. This recipe doesn't require exact amounts, so you can make brine and use any amount of peppers (or other vegetables) you have.

- 4 cups white vinegar
- 4 cups water
- 4 cups sugar
- 8 cups assorted peppers*
- 2 cups garlic cloves
- Fresh dill sprigs
- 4 tablespoon dill seed, divided
- 4 tablespoons peppercorns, divided
- 4 teaspoons salt divided
- 4 teaspoons crushed red pepper, divided

Heat vinegar and water to low boil. Add sugar and stir to dissolve.

Poke holes in smaller peppers with toothpick. Pack peppers, garlic and dill sprigs into quart jars. Add 1 tablespoon dill seed and peppercorns, and 1 teaspoon of salt and crushed red pepper to each jar.

Ladle warm brine over peppers. Cover and shake well.

Refrigerate up to 2 months. Best if made several days before first use.

Yield: 3 to 4 quarts

**Leave smaller peppers whole and slice others into strips.*

Tomato-Pimento Cheese Shortcakes

With Black-Peppered Whipped Cream

Ahhh...juicy NC summer tomatoes, how we love thee. Since they don't need much fuss'n over, this simple shortcake is just right for breakfast, brunch or as a side with a juicy steak. A dollop of savory cream is the crowning glory.

Shortcakes *(makes 24)*

- 3¼ cups biscuit mix
- 1 cup thick pimento cheese
- ¼ cup mayonnaise (Duke's preferred)
- ½ cup club soda
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

Filling

- About 14 large tomatoes, diced
- ¾ cup minced sweet onion
- 4 tablespoons preferred oil
- 4 tablespoons preferred vinegar
- 4 tablespoons honey
- ½ cup each chopped basil and oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste

Whipped cream

- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 (8-ounce) cream cheese with chives
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Herbs to garnish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine shortcake ingredients and drop by heaping tablespoon onto prepared baking pan. Spread flat with back of spoon.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes. Cool.

Stir all filling ingredients together least one hour before serving. Spoon filling over 12 shortcakes, covering each with second cake.

For topping, whip cream and cream cheese until thickened. Blend in pepper.

Top shortcakes with dollop of whipped cream and garnish with fresh herbs.

Yield: 12 servings

Unless otherwise noted, recipes on this page are from Wendy Perry, a culinary adventurist and blogger, who chats about goodness around NC on her blog at WendysHomeEconomics.com.

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From Your Kitchen

Old Fashioned Lemon Pie

- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted
- ⅔ cup sugar, divided
- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 can condensed milk
- ½ cup lemon juice (use real lemons or bottled juice)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. For crust, combine graham cracker crumbs, butter and ⅓ cup sugar. Press mixture into bottom and up sides of a 9-inch deep-dish pie plate.

Bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Let cool completely.

For filling, whisk egg yolks with condensed milk until blended and then add lemon juice and stir until combined. Pour this mixture into the graham cracker crust.

For meringue, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer on medium speed until soft peaks form. Add ⅓ cup sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, while beating on high speed. Continue beating on high speed until the sugar dissolves and stiff, glossy peaks form.

Spread the meringue over top of lemon mixture, making sure the meringue seals the edge of the pastry. Bake for an additional 10 minutes, or until meringue is golden brown.

Yield: 8 servings

Send Us Your Recipes

Contributors whose recipes are published will receive $25. We retain reprint rights for all submissions. Recipes submitted are not necessarily entirely original. Include your name, address, phone number (for questions), and the name of your electric cooperative. Mail to: Carolina Country Kitchen, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC, 27611. Or submit your recipe online at: carolinacountry.com/myrecipe.

—Jenny Lloyd, recipes editor

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*Prices include Hopper Duo for qualifying customers. Hopper, Hopper w/Sling or Hopper 3 $5/mo. more. Upfront fees may apply based on credit qualification. Fees apply for additional TVs: Hopper $15/mo., Joey $5/mo., Super Joey $10/mo. All offers require credit qualification, 2-Year commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay. Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Important Terms and Conditions: Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and eAutoPay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 7/11/18. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of $20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at $59.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 programming package, local channels, HD service fees, and Hopper Duo for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades ($69.99 for AT120+, $79.99 for AT200, $89.99 for AT250), monthly fees for upgraded or additional receivers ($5-$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be $10-$15). NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), DISH Protect, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: 3 Mos. Free: After 3 mos., you will be billed $55/mo. for HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, Starz and DISH Movie Pack unless you call to cancel. Gift and Pre-paid Cards: Courtesy of GoDISH.com for credit-qualified customers. Customers who do not qualify may be eligible for a secondary gift offer. Cards are issued by Citibank, N.A. pursuant to a license from Visa® U.S.A. Inc. and managed by Citi Prepaid Services. Cards will not have cash access and can be used everywhere Visa® debit cards are accepted. Cards expire 6 months from date issued. Mail-in redemption form is required within 60 days of qualified activation to receive gift. Customer account must be current and in good standing at the time of redemption. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of gift. Other: Netflix streaming membership required. All packages, programming, features, and functionality and all prices and fees not included in price lock are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., if selected you will be billed $8.99/mo. for DISH Protect Silver unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. HBO®, Cinemax® and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. SHOWTIME is a registered trademark of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS Company. STARZ and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. © 2018 GoDISH.com. All rights reserved. Internet speeds, prices, and providers vary by customer address. $49.99 price refers to 25Mbps plan. Restrictions apply. 25 Mbps internet service available nationwide, but may become temporarily unavailable to certain addresses based on local beam capacity. Availability is subject to change without notice. Internet not provided by DISH and will be billed separately. Call for details.